

## Diversity

The rich cultural diversity in our community is reflected in the way families bring up their children. Approaches to being a parent can vary within families, ethnic groups and communities. British society acknowledges and affirms cultural diversity but children, whatever their cultural background, always have a right to be protected. Anything that causes harm to a child, whether part of a cultural or faith tradition, is never acceptable. Some practices that may be culturally acceptable in some countries are banned by law in the United Kingdom.

1. Get to know your child
2. Listen to your child
3. Be as positive as you can
4. Keep the rules simple
5. Be consistent
6. Reason and discuss matters with your child
7. Provide positive opportunities
8. Agree sanctions with the child
9. The behaviour is bad – not the child
10. Ask for help

*If you have any questions about this leaflet or any of the issues it raises with regard to your child, do not hesitate to contact your child's school. If you have concerns about another child please contact the Civic Offices on 020 8303 7777.*

*For more information please see:*

*AFRUCA's Manual on Child Protection for Parents in the UK available at:  
<http://www.afruca.org/publications/manuals/>*

*NSPCC's Encouraging Better Behaviour available at: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)*



If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different format, please call 020 8303 7777 and ask for Communications/Graphics. The reference to quote is 603924/4.16



# Disciplining Your Children

## A Guide For Parents



## Child Protection – What's it got to do with you?

Parents and carers want the best for their children. They help their children by giving clear and consistent messages about their behaviour. Sometimes parents can respond too harshly to situations and a child might suffer an injury or emotional harm as a result of the methods used. In some circumstances this may result in a referral to Children's Social Care and Police who may be called to investigate. This results in great stress for the whole family.

The aim of this leaflet is to support parents and carers to feel confident in managing their children's behaviour and to seek advice if they are having difficulties.

## The Law – how it applies to you

UK law protects every child up to the age of 18 years from cruel and abusive treatment by their parents or carer. It is against the law for a parent to use physical punishment on their child that causes marks. It is not only illegal to harm and leave a mark, it is also illegal to use prolonged stress positions or to emotionally harm a child.



## Positive Parenting

1. Have clear, simple rules and limits
2. Listen to your child
3. Lead by your own example
4. Praise and reward good behaviour
5. Be consistent
6. Reason and discuss matters with your child
7. Provide positive opportunities
8. Agree sanctions with your child
9. Criticise the behaviour you do not like, NOT your child
10. Ask for help before you feel overwhelmed



## Boundaries

We all know that children test our limits at times. We set 'boundaries' about what we expect of our children and family. If these boundaries are too loose and parents are inconsistent, children can become confused. If they are too harsh, then children do not develop their own sense of responsibility. Think about the rules in your house and explain these to your children. Give them a chance to discuss the rules and to know when things might change. For instance, during school days you may expect a fixed bedtime but at weekends this could be later or negotiated.

## Consistency

It is important that children have routine and predictability. They need to know that there are consequences for how they behave. Rewarding positive behaviour is generally more effective than punishing challenging behaviour. Praise and encouragement are powerful tools for developing good habits. However challenging your child's behaviour is, it is important to be as consistent and fair as possible.

Your children need your attention and support. Young children should never be left on their own or in the care of other children. If you need help with childcare you can ask the Family Information Service for advice (see reverse).